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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [ELAB](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 10/27/08

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ARTICLES:

(1) Discontent simmering in prefectural police; SOFA barrier emerges again

OKINAWA TIMES (Page 24) (Full)
October 26, 2008

Another case has emerged in which the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces

Agreement (SOFA) is serving as a barrier. Now that the U.S. military took back (to its base) on Oct. 25 the fuselage of the crashed Cessna belonging to the U.S. military, discontent is simmering among (Okinawa Prefectural Police) investigative officers. An expert also described it as a symbolic event of paradoxes in foreign military forces in Japan.

"Seizure was necessary to determine the cause and secure evidence. It was just regrettable."

Immediately after the accident occurred, the prefectural police obtained warrants necessary for searches and seizure. Because the accident occurred outside official duties, some police officials had expected that investigations would go relatively smoothly. But their expectations dashed as the U.S. military did not give its concurrence.

Owned by the U.S. military and used by an association of aviation lovers affiliated with the U.S. military, the crashed aircraft was not connected with any military secrets. Despite that, the U.S. military rejected the prefectural police's request without citing any clear reason. This can explain why there is discontent in the prefectural police.

Although the prefectural police intend to ask for (the U.S. military's approval) for future inspections, as necessary, what will happen in the future is unknown. In the wake of a U.S. military helicopter's crash in Okinawa International University in 2004, the U.S. military took back the chopper and did not effectively allow the prefectural police to conduct inspections. There was a case in

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the 1970s in which the U.S. military secretly took back the engine of the aircraft that had crashed outside Okinawa, a piece of evidence, to the U.S. mainland.

An expert criticize the refusal as a symbolic event of paradoxes of U.S. forces in Japan

Lawyer Yutaka Kato, who is well versed in the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement, said, "Because the U.S. military possesses the Cessna, the right rests with the U.S. military under the pact." At the same time, he criticized the U.S. military, saying: "U.S. military assets include even recreational objects. This shows that U.S. military privileges are granted based on clear policy intent. It is the typical paradox of the stationing of foreign military forces in Japan and allowing them to act freely."

Okinawa Heiwaiinkai (Peace Committee) Secretary General Yasuhiro Okubo said: "In a situation where the perpetrator is not clearly identified and compensation remains ambiguous, the residents would suffer damage. The governments of Japan and the United States should unveil all bilateral agreements, including 'secret deals' and take their responsibility." Further, the Okinawa Heiwa Undou Center has decided to stage a protest rally in front of Kadena Air Base on the evening of Oct. 27.

(2) Is Okinawa America's colony? Local residents angry with U.S. military's response following the crash of light aircraft

RYUKYU SHIMPO (Page 27) (Full)
October 26, 2008

Nago

In the wake of the crash of a U.S. military light aircraft (on Oct. 24), the U.S. forces hurriedly dismantled the fuselage and removed it from the crash site on Oct. 25. Although the prefectural police sought to confiscate the aircraft to determine the cause of the accident and the facts, the U.S. military rejected the request. As was the case with the U.S. military helicopter that crashed into the campus of Okinawa International University in August 2004, the U.S. military took the lead in investigative procedures. A prefectural police source expressed strong discontent, saying: "They may still have the mentality of treating Okinawa as an American colony." Meanwhile, the local residents who pressed the U.S. military for

access to the crash site were angry since they were kept out of the loop.

Six hours into the on-site investigation that began shortly after noon Oct. 25, the demolished aircraft was loaded onto a trailer by a crane-like vehicle before the eyes of the residents of the Makiya district, where the accident had occurred. The trailer left the site shortly after 8:00 p.m. Without access to the crash sight, Makiya residents were left out of the loop. Representatives and others were angry, with one saying: "Why are the investigations proceeding under the initiative of the U.S. military? Isn't this the same as the Okinawa International University case?" While holding back their anger, the residents watched the trailer drove away from the site.

The start of the on-site investigation, originally planned at 10:00 a.m., was delayed about two hours because talks between the prefectural police and the U.S. military experienced difficulties over a difference in views on how to conduct the investigation. The

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on-site investigation by the prefectural police ended in about three and a half hours. The police investigation was immediately followed by the U.S. military's work. As seen in the initial work to cut the wings, the procedures suggested that priority was given to collecting the plane rather than investigating the aircraft.

The trailer to carry the fuselage arrived at the crash site at around 4:30 p.m. Upon learning of the transport of the fuselage, Makiya district representatives and others complained to Nago Police Station officers from outside the police line, "This is not what we heard." The Nago Police Station explained: "The investigation continued up to the removal of the fuselage. There still remains the collection of soil." Representatives who saw U.S. service members and others calmly conducted work for the removal of the aircraft all complained, with one saying, "Why do we have to be at the U.S. military's beck and call?"

Kenji Kina, mayor of the Makiya district, made this comment about the fact that he did not have access to the crash site: "We are victims. We don't have access to the crash site, and we are very angry. As the mayor of the district, I have accountability to the district people. I'm worried since I won't be able to offer an adequate explanation."

Nago military affairs special committee to meet tomorrow to discuss U.S. military protest resolution

Nago

Following the crash of the U.S. military aircraft in the Makiya district, Nago City, the Nago City Assembly decided on Oct. 25 to hold a meeting of the military base affairs special committee (chaired by Takehiro Toguchi) on Oct. 27. The committee is scheduled to discuss at its special meeting the adoption of a protest resolution against the U.S. military and a draft resolution.

MOD Local Cooperation Bureau chief conveys regret to USFJ commander

Defense Ministry Local Cooperation Bureau Director-General Motomi Inoue expressed his regret to U.S. Forces Japan Commander Lt. Gen. Edward Rice over the phone on Oct. 24, while calling for efforts to prevent a recurrence and determine the cause of the accident.

Frustrated senior prefectural police officer says, "It's the same as at the time of the Okinawa International University accident"

The U.S. military's rejection of the Okinawa Prefectural Police's request for the confiscation of the crashed airplane drew an outcry from some senior police officers. One officer said: "The accident occurred in a civilian area, and we don't want to see the U.S. military acts as it pleases. We expected the U.S. military's refusal from the beginning. The U.S. military seems to have a mentality of treating Okinawa as a colony, as was the days immediately after the end of the war."

A prefectural investigation officer who had interviewed U.S. service

members on the night of Oct. 24, said frustratingly: "We asked where they were stationed and their status, but they did not answer, saying they were ordered by their (military) superiors not to reveal them. It might follow the same path as the Okinawa International University accident."

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Another senior prefectural police officer expressed his anger about the fact that the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) stands in the way of their investigation, saying: "In investigating an accident, Japanese and foreigners must be treated equally. Charges must be filed based on evidence. But under the law (SOFA) such is not possible without the concurrence of the U.S. military."

Large part of fuselage visible during transport without maintenance vehicles

The aircraft in question was transported by a 20-meter-long trailer at around 8:15 p.m. Oct. 25 from the crash site in the Makiya district, Nago City. It arrived at Kadena Air Base's No. 1 Gate at around 9:40 p.m. via National Highway Route 58.

Because a large part of the fuselage was visible even though it was partially covered with a sheet of cloth, it drew much attention of other drivers who looked anxious. Accompanied by no maintenance vehicles, the trailer carrying the fuselage drove along National Highway Route 58 at a speed of 60-70 kilometers an hour, causing no congestion.

(3) Prime Minister Aso aims to eradicate image of being hawk

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
October 25, 2008

Prime Minister Taro Aso's meetings with the top leaders of China and South Korea -- his debut on the international scene -- were carried out in a friendly atmosphere. Aso has now laid the groundwork for his diplomacy of seeking practical results, wiping off his image of being a hawk politically. However, there still remain such issues as the gap in historical views that need to be resolved between Japan and China and between Japan and South Korea.

Mutual benefit by competition

Aso delivered a speech on Oct. 24 in a ceremony for the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Japan-China Peace and Friendship Treaty. In it, he stressed the need for strengthening friendly ties between Japan and China, saying: "Competing while cooperating is a true strategic, mutual-benefiting relationship." A government official attended the ceremony gave a sigh of relief, saying: "Although there was a risk, he made a positive challenge. His speech was a hot topic of political conversations there and it is now highly regarded."

Former Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda is a pro-Chinese politician. Aso, however, has had an image of being a hawk. The notion of building "the arc of freedom and prosperity, which Aso advocated when he was foreign minister in the Abe cabinet, is a strategy of strengthening cooperation with countries from Southeast Asia to Eastern Europe. It was taken as a strategy of creating a net encircling Russia and China. Aso's idea provoked neighboring countries to anger. Aso's aide said: "Contrary to his real intent, it was taken as having an ideological side." Aso therefore has made efforts to sweep away such an image by putting an end to his call for an arc of freedom and prosperity in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly and in this policy speech.

In his speech at the 30th anniversary of the Japan-China Peace and Friendship Treaty, Aso aimed to win China's trust by talking in his

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own words about Japan-China relations, while taking over the strategic reciprocal-relationship policy advocated by the Abe and

Fukuda governments. The key words were "common benefits," "competition," and "potential." Aso appears to be building diplomacy toward China, while frankly speaking with China. Aso is trying to build relations with China under which both Tokyo and Beijing can talk about their real intentions so that he will be able to play up his diplomatic skills to the Japanese public.

In his meeting the South Korean president, Aso conveyed his view to President Lee Myung Bak that he would take over a policy of moving forward with a mature partnership. While economic globalization is going on, relationships between Japan and China and between Japan and South Korea have become closer. A senior official said: "In consideration of Japan's present position, no Japanese prime minister can change the nation's foreign policy very much.

China, South Korea expect Japan will continue to improve ties with them

Chinese President Hu Jintao said: "China and Japan are standing at a starting point for new history of bilateral relations." Prime Minister Wen Jiabao said: "I believe that Prime Minister Taro Aso will promote China-Japan relations." The two Chinese leaders, who met with Aso at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, were liberal in their praise.

The Chinese government endeavored to lay the groundwork for Aso's visit to Beijing. According to Chinese sources, China informed Japan from early on of its decision to support Tokyo's bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, resulting in Japan's overwhelming victory in the competition with Iran.

However, China is still concerned about the weak political base of the Aso administration. A source connected with the Chinese Communist Party said: "In the China-Japan summit, which was held under the unstable Japanese political situation, what the two leaders could only do was to confirm the principles of bilateral ties."

The summit between Aso and Lee was held in a friendly atmosphere. The South Korea Blue House said that the two top leaders had continued the talks beyond the expected time, while revealing President Lee's remarks: "Although ROK-Japan relations once came to a halt, they have never retreated. I hope they will not falter in the future as well."

The word falter refers to the Takeshima/Dokdo islets, which were described in the Japanese education ministry's explanatory manuals of new curriculum guidelines for junior high schools when Prime Minister Fukuda was in office. The Lee administration was shocked since it had advocated a future-oriented relationship with Japan.

A senior South Korean Blue House official said: "No such delicate issues as one on history were mentioned" in the Aso-Lee meeting. However, the Japanese government will discuss later this year whether to describe the Takeshima/Dokdo islets in new educational guidelines for high schools. Therefore, the South Korean government strongly suspects that bilateral ties between Tokyo and Seoul may be strained again even if they are repaired.

(4) Japan should designate North Korea as terrorist state

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SANKEI (Page 15) (Slightly abridged)
October 25, 2008

By Hiroshi Yuasa, correspondent in Tokyo

Hill made the remark

In response to North Korea's "blackmail" that it would halt the process of disabling its nuclear facility, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill gave in and decided to remove the North from the list of state sponsors of terrorism.

He has forgotten the words by President Ronald Reagan: "Trust, but

verify." What is worse, the Bush administration, which was critical of the Clinton administration for its reconciliatory stance toward North Korea, has now rejected its own policy toward the North.

Since (the U.S.) in its policy toward North Korea has made light of Japan's wishes, Japan must now apply additional sanctions on the DPRK. This view was expressed in a front page article in the Sankei Shimbun on Oct. 13. In it, Fuji Kamiya, an professor emeritus at Keio University, suggested that Japan should designate North Korea as a terrorist state, because abducting is indisputably a terrorist act. This argument is quite reasonable, and I am willing to go along with his argument.

There are few who remember that Assistant Secretary Hill had referred to the idea of Japan designating North Korea as a terrorist nation. Probably around this spring, Hill cynically said when asked by reporters whether the U.S. was planning to delist North Korea: "Our moves are line with the U.S. national interests. Japan should independently designate the North."

I do not intend to use his words in an underhanded way, but Japan should not hesitate to designate North Korea as a terrorist state. Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Deputy Secretary General Akihisa Nagashima, a national security expert, made this reassuring remark in the Yomiuri Shimbun dated Oct. 21: "We should show to the international community our position of not letting this issue be moved off the table, for instance, by taking such measures as designating North Korea as a terrorist state."

The Liberal Democratic Party, the DPJ, and the New Komeito revised the North Korean Human Rights Law in June of last year to add this provision: "The government must properly work on multilateral development banks to take steps that would contribute to resolving the issue of Japanese nationals abducted by North Korea." If it takes time to enact new legislation to designate North Korea as a terrorist state, Japan will be able to use this provision that would bring about the same effect.

Mobilize all laws

Although this is an irresponsible statement, may I suggest how about designating the regime of Kim Jong Il as a crime syndicate by using the Anti-mobster Law and then issuing an order to eliminate that regime? Applying domestic law is not a wild argument at all in the U.S.

The U.S military detained Manuel Noriega and convicted of him under the federal charge of narcotic trafficking. When a Central

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Intelligence Agency (CIA) member was killed by a Pakistani, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) members pursued the murderer who had fled to Pakistan, and brought him to the U.S. A ruling was handed down there.

The U.S. is quite a stouthearted nation. Japan, though it does not have such undaunted courage to that extent, should be determined to slap sanctions against the North and prepare a strategy to that end.

Washington's removal of North Korea from its terror blacklist leads to enabling the North to receive financial aid from international financial institutions and to start monetary transactions with the U.S. This means the U.S. sanctions against North Korea will end. There is no other way but for Japan, which is saddled with the abduction issue, to call on international financial institutions to refrain from offering aid to the North.

Japan is the second largest contributor to the World Bank and is the largest contributor to the Asian Development Bank. There is an option of taking the top post in the World Bank from the U.S. by injecting significantly more capital in the bank. In this case, Japan will be able to demand the presidency of the World Bank now held by the U.S., as its right to speak will increase in the bank.

In the 1990s, Japan gave up the top post just before it was about to

outpace the U.S. in terms of contributions in the 9th capital increase of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The change of top contributors means that the U.S.-led postwar regime will encounter a challenge. (The U.S.) in a flurry came to ask then Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa to cancel the capital investment.

North Korea might find it easier to ask the Asian Development Bank to finance it. The top post in the Asian bank is now held by Haruhiko Kuroda, a former Finance Ministry official, and China reportedly is watching eagerly to get a chance to grab the post. To prevent its scheme from being implemented, it is conceivable for Japan to increase capital or change its members to form a powerful lineup. These measures, in addition to economic sanctions, are expected to work effectively to apply pressure to the North.

U.S. government also divided

Views in the U.S. government were also split over whether to remove North Korea from its blacklist. Some of those who were close to Hill have begun to leave.

The condition for delisting a nation under the Antiterrorism Law is that the nation should promise not to support international terrorism and acts of terrorism in the future as a result of fundamental changes in the leadership and policies. North Korea has yet to fulfill this condition.

Did Washington make the concession, reflecting the current administration's irritation in its last days, or in an attempt to keep the North in negotiations until the inauguration of the next administration? That is why the U.S. is alarmed at a mounting mood against it or the emergence of an argument in Japan calling for Japan to go nuclear. The Japanese government should repeatedly call on the U.S. government to withdraw the delisting decision as the need arises.

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(5) Sakhalin-2 Project: Exports of LNG to Japan likely to begin early next year

NIKKEI (Page 6) (Full)
October 27, 2008

The Sakhalin-2 project for the development of resources off Sakhalin, Russia, has at long last entered the final phase in the run-up to full operations after all sorts of troubles and difficulties. The construction of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) manufacturing plant and pipelines has almost been completed. While there is concern about the future of the Sakhalin-1 project due to a fall in crude oil prices and the financial crisis, exports of LNG to Japan in the Sakhalin-2 project, into which Japan has poured funds and technologies, will begin as early as next January or February.

There is a cluster of brand-new plants facing the Aniva Bay, about one-hour drive from Yuzhno Sakhalinsk, a central city on the Sakhalin Island. This is the port for the shipment of LNG and crude oil produced in the Sakhalin-2 Project located in Prigorodnoye.

Ian Craig, president of Sakhalin Energy, a consortium to develop Sakhalin-2 oil and gas project, pointed out, "The project has entered the commercialization stage." He said, "I cannot say definitely, but I hope to start exporting LNG as early as early next year."

Crude oil and natural gas mined in epicontinental mining areas in the northern part of the island will be transported to the shipment port in Prigorodnoye via pipelines. Natural gas will be liquefied there and shipped by special vessels. Japan's technologies were used in the project -- the construction of the LNG plants by Chiyoda Corporation and Toyo Engineering and the building of LNG ships -- by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries.

The output of LNG is about 9.6 million tons a year. Approximately 60 PERCENT of the total output is bound for Japan. TEPCO, Kyushu Electric Power Co. and Tokyo Gas have signed long-term contracts.

Japan is expected to depend on the Sakhalin-2 project for about 8 PERCENT of its gas demand. The sales of crude oil, whose production started in 1999, are mainly Japan-bound. The completion of the Sakhalin-2 project will likely help Japan put an end to its dependence on the Middle East in terms of the procurement of energy.

The commercialization of the project was realized after many twists and turns. The project cost has doubled from the original estimate. Russia at one stage cancelled the authorization of the construction work, using environmental destruction as justification. The project was at one time on the verge of disruption. At work behind the complications was the Russian government's hard-line stance. It increasingly strengthened the control of energy resources. In the end, however, the problem was settled with Russia's Gazprom, a natural gas monopoly, taking over a majority of interests in the project.

President Craig said, "The participation of Gazprom was helpful for the construction of pipelines." The financial standing of Gazprom has deteriorated due to the current financial crisis. However, Japan Finance Corporation (former Japan Bank for International Cooperation) and a group of private banks have already decided to extend loans for the Sakhalin-2 project. With facilities almost

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completed, the project will now enter a full fund-collection phase. The outlook is that if crude oil prices stand at about 70 dollars per barrel, it would be possible to collect the invested money by around 2012.

The project has benefited the Province of Sakhalin. The Sakhalin Governor Alexander Khoroshavin said, "The Sakhalin Resources Development Project contributes to 75 PERCENT of the industrial production in the Sakhalin Province." He expressed expectations for Japan boosting investment, noting that the project has led to improved income of residents and a decline in the unemployment rate.

The Far East is lagging behind the European side of Russian in terms of the development of the economy. It is a pressing issue for the federal government to develop the economy of the Far East.

A plan to export natural gas to China in the Sakhalin-1 Project, joined by Itochu Corporation and Marubeni Corporation, has been under suspension due to pressure from the Russian government and Gazprom. The future of the project is becoming increasingly unclear due to the decline in crude oil prices and the financial crisis. It seems difficult for more Japanese companies to join the project as long as the Russian government changes rules, based on opportunism.

(6) TOP HEADLINES

Asahi:

Prime Minister Aso seek to ease bank accounting rules to help stabilize financial markets

Mainichi:

Three leading banks mulling capital increase of up to 1 trillion yen: Stock plunges beginning to affect Japanese banks

Yomiuri: Nikkei: Sankei

Emergency economic market stabilization measures: Government eyeing boosting capital injections into banks to 10 trillion yen

Tokyo Shimbun:

Government mulling dispatching GSDF personnel to Afghanistan to help wounded soldiers: Complying with U.S. request could infringe on Constitution

Akahata:

Preferential securities tax system: Ten rich persons with income more than 10 billion yen receive tax cut worth 18.3 billion yen

(7) EDITORIALS

Asahi:

- (1) Plunge in crude oil prices: Lessons learnt
- (2) Academic studies: University should make best use of women's ability

Mainichi:

- (1) Cabinet Office Personnel Division should devise system that is not a stopgap measure
- (2) Financial crisis: Economy that can control market should be built

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Yomiuri:

- (1) Road map for tax system: Consumption tax is the only mid-term fiscal resource
- (2) Print Culture Day: Value encounter with books

Nikkei:

- (1) Thoughts on freezing current value accounting system

Sankei:

- (1) Japan-India summit: Cooperation with largest democratic country
- (2) Book Week: Make children book-lovers

Tokyo Shimbun:

- (1) OPEC cuts back on oil production: Continue to make effort to stop excessive dependence on oil
- (2) Large city system covering :Yokohama, Osaka and Nagoya urged to make proposals as representative of provincial areas

Akahata:

- (1) Credit crunch, forcible collecting of loans: Guidance strict to major banks needed

(8) Prime Minister's schedule, Oct. 24

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
October 25, 2008

Morning

Held a meeting with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak at a hotel. Met Chinese President Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao at the People's Great Hall in succession.

Noon

Attended a reception for the 30th anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and China.

Afternoon

Responded to an interview with reporters from press companies at a hotel. Met with German Chancellor Merkel at a hotel. Attended a welcome ceremony of the ASEM summit at the People's Great Hall. Posed for a photo.

Evening

Attended an opening ceremony. Briefly talked with Mongolian President Enkhbayar.

Night

Attended a working dinner. Held an informal meeting with accompanying reporters at a hotel. Stayed there.

Prime Minister's schedule, October 25 & 26

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)

October 26, 2008

Oct. 25

Morning

Briefly talked with Austrian Prime Minister Gusenbauer at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Attended the second round of the ASEM summit. Met with Pakistan Prime Minister Gilani.

Noon
Attended a working lunch.

Afternoon
Met Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi. Later, met French President Sarkozy. Attended a closing ceremony. Responded to an interview with correspondents from Japan and other countries. Met Japanese nationals living in China at the Japanese Ambassador's Official Residence. Left Beijing International airport by government plane.

23:45
Arrived at Haneda Airport.

Oct. 26

00:34
Returned to his private residence in Kamiyama-cho.

Prime Minister's schedule, Oct. 26& 27

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)

October 27, 2008

Oct. 26

12:35
Took a walk around his private residence in Kamiyama-cho.

15:39
Reported on his return home at the Imperial Palace.

16:02
Met Metropolitan Police Board's Criminal Investigation Chief Funamoto, First Investigation Division Chief Tachinobe, and Station Chief Katsuta at the Manseibashi Police Station.

16:31
Delivered a speech in front of JR Akihabara Station.

17:25
Held a talk show with cartoonists, Takao Saito and Kenshi Hirokane at Akihabara UDX. Later, enjoyed a comic character exhibition, with METI Minister Nikai and Hirokane.

18:24
Attended a joint meeting of nationwide LDP youth department heads, youth section heads, and women's department heads at the Grand Arc Hanzomon.

20:10
Dined with his secretaries at a Chinese restaurant in the Grand Prince Hotel.

22:06
Met Finance Minister and Financial Services Minister Nakagawa, Vice Finance Minister Sugimoto, Secretariat Director General Katsu, and Financial Services Agency Director General Sato.

23:14
Arrived at a pub in the hotel with the secretaries.

Oct. 27

00:30
Returned to his private residence.

SCHIEFFER